

Kennedy Backs Mahon Attack On Loose Talk

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That 'Silence Is
Golden'

By FRANK CORMIER

WASHINGTON, March 8 (AP) — Representative George Mahon's demand in the House yesterday that public officials keep quiet about American intelligence activities was welcomed by President Kennedy. Many members of Congress agreed that "silence is golden."

The President, it was learned today, was pleased by the Texas Democrat's speech. White House sources said, however, that Mahon acted on his own initiative and that Mr. Kennedy had no foreknowledge of the attack on loose talk.

Mahon, chairman of the House defense appropriations subcommittee, said, "Officials in Moscow, Peking and Havana must applaud our stupidity in announcing publicly facts which they would gladly spend huge sums of money endeavoring to obtain."

HE GAVE no specific examples and said the executive branch and the legislative, Republicans and Democrats alike, "must share the blame" for "making us the laughing stock of the world."

Mahon, who has been handling defense secrets for more than 20 years as a member of the military appropriations subcommittee, demanded an end to the loose talk which he said is doing "outrageous and intolerable" damage to United States intelligence efforts.

In expressing agreement with Mahon, Senate Democratic majority leader Mike Mansfield of Montana said, "I feel that there's too much intelligence given out." Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem.), Washington, told a reporter, "All should heed the admonition that silence is the golden rule of intelligence."

ON THE HOUSE side, Mahon's speech brought a bipartisan plea to try to stop the tongue wagging as far as Congress is concerned.

"I hope that during these con-

fused times members of Congress will be particularly careful about what they say," said Representative Frances P. Bolton of Ohio, top Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

"We must exercise discretion in these matters," said Representative Ben F. Jensen of Iowa, senior Republican on the Appropriations Committee. "None of us should be responsible for giving aid and comfort to the Communists by loose talk."

Mahon, Mrs. Bolton and Jensen are on committees which receive much classified and top-secret information about intelligence operations.

Assistant Senate Democratic majority leader Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota suggested in a Senate speech that a new joint committee on national security affairs be established with legislative jurisdiction over all Government intelligence agencies.

IN A SEPARATE interview, Senator Kenneth B. Keating (Rep.), New York, who repeatedly has charged the Kennedy Administration with understating the extent of the Cuban arms buildup, said, "Any steps necessary to protect our national security will have my support. Any attempt to suppress information simply to avoid embarrassment to government officials deserves no such consideration."

"The basic issue in the debate on Soviet Cuba is not over our intelligence system but with regard to what policies we should adopt to meet the Communist threat in this hemisphere. We need the facts to determine a policy, but we don't need to compromise intelligence operations for this purpose."